

REMARKS

Claims 1-84 are now pending in the present application. The Final Office Action dated December 6, 2005 (FOA) rejected Claims 1-82. Claims 1 and 44 are amended. Two new claims are added to the original 82 claims.

The 35 U.S.C. §103 rejection of Claims 1-82 over Allan & Bass:

Claims 1-82 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Allen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,526,456, hereinafter referred to as Allan) in view of Bass et al (U.S. Patent No. 6,744,446, hereinafter referred to as Bass). Applicants submitted a response to the FOA on January 23, 2006, the content of which are hereby incorporated by reference. As argued in the response, applicants continue to assert that the references cited in the FOA do not disclose or suggest all of the claim limitations. Despite the clear meaning of the claim limitations as they should be understood in view of the specification, applicants have amended independent Claims 1 and 44 to specify that the collection of virtual containers identify a rental package of a predefined number of the one or more software products that the set of users may access. Support is found throughout the specification, including on page 12, line 20 through page 13, line 10, and Figures 8 and 9. Accordingly, the rejection of independent Claims 1, and 44 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should be withdrawn.

The meaning of limitations of independent Claims 33, 36, 37, 76, 79, and 82 should also be understood with an understanding of the meaning of limitations of independent Claims 1 and 44. As argued in prior responses, the cited references do not disclose or suggest the limitations of the independent claims as the limitations should be understood in view of the specification. Accordingly, the rejection of independent Claims 33, 36, 37, 76, 79, and 82 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should also be withdrawn.

Dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as the independent claims from which the dependent claims depend. Thus, dependent Claims 2-32, 34, 35, 38-43, 45-75, 78, 80, and 81 are patentable for at least the same reasons as their corresponding independent claims.

Further, the FOA and prior office actions address only dependent Claims 2 and 3. The FOA and prior office actions do not provided any reference citations or rationale for rejecting the additional limitations of the vast majority of the dependent claims. Accordingly, the rejection of dependent Claims 2-32, 34, 35, 38-43, 45-75, 78, 80, and 81 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) should also be withdrawn. At the very least rejection of the dependent claims should not be made final, so that applicants have an opportunity to respond.

New Claims 83 and 84:

New Claims 83 and 84 are added. Support is found throughout the specification, including page 12, line 20 through page 14, line 20, and Figures 3, 8, and 9.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing remarks, Applicants believe that this response has responded fully to the concerns expressed in the FOA and that each of the pending claims is in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue. If, in the opinion of the Examiner, a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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